



Information Package

Foster Carer Support Officer (permanent full-time)

Thank you for considering Veritas House as your next employer. We are a vibrant, independent, community-based not-for-profit organisation with a specific focus on supporting vulnerable children, young people and their families. Veritas currently delivers services in Permanency Placement (formerly OOHC), Youth Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS), Non Placement Support (NPSS), Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI), Homeless Youth Assistance Program (HYAP) and Premier's Youth Initiative. The majority of our funding is provided by Family and Community Services.

This Information Package is designed to tell you more about the role, identify the selection criteria we will be using to select the right candidate, and explain the application process.

Benefits of working with Veritas House

Veritas House is based in the Central West of NSW, with offices in Bathurst and Orange. As an organisation, we are committed to our values:

- Compassionate
- Innovative
- Inclusive
- Individualised
- Culturally sensitive, and
- Fair and honest

If you work with us, you will enjoy:

- Up to \$15,900 tax free salary packaging per annum;
- Wellbeing days each year, in addition to your annual leave
- Exposure to a range of client situations that will develop your skills and allow you to work to your strengths;
- A strong, strengths-based culture that values what you do well and will work with you to grow;
- The opportunity to develop your career in an expanding service;
- The chance to make a contribution within the community you call home

If you believe you meet the selection criteria, find that our values resonate and are passionate about our mission of providing values based and child-centred care, advocacy and support in Central Western NSW, we'd like to hear from you.

Position Advertisement

Foster Carer Support Officer

Veritas House is a vibrant, not-for-profit, community-based organisation with a specific focus on supporting vulnerable children, young people, their families and carers.

Our foster care program is growing, and as are the number of Carers we support.

Foster Carer Support Officer – full-time, permanent

Initially based in Bathurst, with potential to move to Orange

Our foster care program and the number of Carers we support is growing This role supports Carers to provide a physically & emotionally safe, nurturing environment for children and young people by:

- Providing ongoing support and guidance
- Helping Carers understand their role and responsibilities
- Arranging and running Carer support functions
- Coordinating Carer training opportunities and promoting attendance
- Facilitating Carer reviews

To apply:

Full details of the position, including the selection criteria and information on how to apply, can be found in the Information Package on our website: www.veritashouse.org.au

Applications close at 9.00 am on Monday, 30th April 2018

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from a CALD background are warmly encouraged to apply.

To apply for this role

These guidelines aim to assist you in submitting applications for advertised vacancies with Veritas House.

The following may assist you in preparing your application:

- Carefully read through this Information Package.
- Conduct some initial research on the organisation by browsing the website and reading key resources.
- If required, seek clarification or additional information on the organisation and the position.
- Decide whether you possess, and can demonstrate, your skills and experience against the selection criteria.
- When addressing the selection criteria, provide examples to demonstrate and substantiate your claims. Examples should outline a situation, identify the action you took, and summarise the subsequent result. Keep your responses concise and in addition to your resume.
- Be aware of the closing date. If, for any reason you cannot submit your application by the closing date, you should ring the contact person to see if a late application will be accepted.
- If you require any special arrangements (e.g. wheelchair access, hearing or visual aids) when attending interview, please discuss these with the contact person when the interview is being arranged.

What you need to include in your application

Veritas House uses a streamlined approach to recruitment. **All applications require:**

1. A Cover Letter introducing yourself and outlining your interest in the position
2. Statement addressing each of the Selection Criteria (as listed on the last page of this document). Each selection criteria should be identified with a heading, followed by a paragraph providing examples of how you have met the criteria.
3. Resume/Curriculum Vitae (CV) that should include:
 - a. contact details including telephone number and email address
 - b. education/qualifications
 - c. an employment history summary including (for each position):
 - i. the employer
 - ii. start and finish dates
 - iii. your position/title
 - iv. your responsibilities and achievements in the position
 - d. professional registrations and/or memberships

You do not need to submit copies of your identification or qualifications. If required, these will be checked later in the recruitment process.

References do not need to be included in your application. Referees will only be contacted if required, and your permission to contact them will be sought first.

Submitting your application

Applications should be submitted via email (by the closing date and time) to:

Position Description

Position Title:	Carer Support Officer
Position Status:	Full-time, permanent
Reports to:	Carer Recruitment and Support Coordinator
Program:	Permanency Placement
Location:	Bathurst and/or Orange (some travel between sites)
Relevant Awards:	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award
Classification:	Community Services Employee – Grade 3 (level dependent on experience)

Requirements:

- Current driver's licence
- NSW Working with Children Check clearance and satisfactory Criminal Record Check

Veritas House Vision

Our Vision is to contribute to the creation of a socially just and caring community in which every person is safe, secure and valued.

Veritas House – Values

The following core operating values influence the culture and public image of Veritas. They articulate ideals that the organisation aspires to hold itself accountable for and offer guidance about how the organisation behaves in carrying out its mission:

- Compassionate
- Innovative
- Inclusive
- Individualised
- Culturally sensitive and
- Fair and Honest

Primary Objective of the Veritas House Foster Care Service

To provide the highest quality services in NSW, that is consistent with the Veritas House mission and values so that the needs of the children and young people are met.

Primary Objective of the Position

This position will play a key role in supporting a pool of competent, dedicated carers and ultimately supporting, strengthening and retaining high quality carers who engage appropriately with the Agency in meeting the needs of children and young people in accordance with best practice and the accreditation standards of the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG).

The role involves intensive support work and advocacy for Carers, who provide a secure, stable and

positive environment that caters to the physical, emotional and wellbeing needs of the children and young people in their care.

The Foster Carer Support Officer will work in close collaboration with all staff, in particular the Carer Recruitment and Support Coordinator, the Permanency Placement Team Leader and team, and the Operations Manager.

Your Level of Decision Making and Authority

You are expected to:

- Act within policy and procedure
- Act under the direction of the Permanency Placement Team Leader

Decisions that are referred to your Team Leader/Manager:

- All issues that require a sign off / approval from the Team Leader, Executive Manager or CEO;
- Issues outside of policy guidelines
- Complaints from children, young people, Carers or birth families
- Requests for new business from funding bodies
- Complaints from funding bodies

Key Role Specific Responsibilities

1. Carer Support and Retention

- Once assessment is completed and carers authorised, remain in regular contact while the Carer is awaiting a placement;
- Following placement, liaise with and provide support to Carers in collaboration with the child's appointed case Worker;
- In collaboration with the Carer Recruitment and Support Coordinator, keep carers informed by assisting to produce a regular newsletter and by regularly updating the Veritas House website with relevant information;
- Assist with tasks that support the Carer's Reference Group;
- Ensure an annual schedule of Carer support functions including phone calls, home visits and other Carer-related activities is planned, enacted and reported on;
- Assist in the provision of Carer recognition of service awards, Carer dinner, Carer Christmas party and distribution of Agency Christmas cards to Carers;
- Utilise approved social media and other technology as appropriate to support and communicate with carers;
- Promote and where appropriate, participate in research and evaluation to develop best practices in carer retention;
- Offer support and advocacy for carers as required;
- Assist Carer Recruitment and Support Coordinator with securing respite care placements
- Support strategies and systems to regularly seek feedback from carers and continually improve systems and practices.

2. Training

- Actively involve Carers in ongoing mandatory and other complimentary training that will assist them to carry out their role;
- Promote participation in training and monitor carer's attendance in relation to training requirements;

- Liaise with other Agency programs and external non-government organisation (NGO) sector partners when planning training;
- Link carers into other relevant training opportunities (internal, external and online).

3. Carer Accountability

- Ensure that relevant probity checks are current for all carers and relevant household members;
- Promote adherence to the Authorised Carers Code of Conduct by supporting carers to understand the responsibilities and expectations of being a carer.
- Work to promote awareness of agency expectations amongst authorised carers and work to support carers to fulfill their responsibilities;
- Facilitate Carer Reviews as per Step by Step requirements (including housing checks).

4. Systems Development

- Adopt a solutions-focused, reflective and critical thinking approach to enable continuous quality improvement in relation to carer recruitment and retention;
- Regularly maintain relevant carer files, databases and registers;
- Support the team in maintaining a vacancy list of carers to assist in placement matching;
- Assist in the development and review of policies and procedures relating to recruitment, assessment, support and training and retention of carers.

5. Administration

- Actively manage the completion of administrative tasks including data reporting and the use of tools to manage workloads and priorities;
- Submit high quality reports that are factual, clear and concise and adequately respond to the information requested;
- Ensure that all Carer contact and engagement is appropriately documented and recorded.

General Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Team Participation & Work Management

- Contribute to the ongoing development of a dynamic, creative and cohesive team;
- Contribute to the development of solid, equitable and honest relationships that support a strong team approach and to maintain a strong work ethic in personal efficiency and effectiveness at all times.

2. Cultural Sensitivity and Appropriateness

- Placements and permanency plans are done in accordance with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander placement principals;
- Culturally and linguistically diverse children and young people have plans in keeping with their culture.

3. Accountability

- Accept professional supervision from the Out of Home Care Team Leader;
- Maintain client records and statistical data as required;
- Work within the organisational policies and procedures of Veritas House;
- Attend team meetings as requested;
- Have a clear understanding of confidentiality and privacy issues pertinent to service users and the Agency;
- Recognise and monitor job stress and personal needs as a worker and take active

responsibility for your own wellbeing in the workplace.

4. Work within a Legal & Ethical Framework

- All work must be carried out in accordance with current service policies, procedures, aims and objectives, common law and funding agreement guidelines;
- Maintain and ensure strict confidentiality;
- As a mandatory reporter, be aware of relevant legislation and mandatory obligations on all issues pertaining to young people; in particular Keep Them Safe legislation and initiatives, Interagency Guidelines and legal responsibilities for reporting children at risk.

5. Work Health and Safety

- Participate in WHS consultation and training as required;
- Actively promote safe work practices in the workplace;
- Adhere to Veritas House WHS policies and procedures;
- Report to the OOHHC Team Leader and the WHS Officer any near misses via WHS Hazard Reports, or illnesses and accidents via WHS Incident Reports.

6. Other Organisational Requirements

- Contribute to the promotion of the organisation by networking with interagency partners and key stakeholders;
- Work as an active member of the wider Veritas House team assisting in other appropriate tasks as required, or as directed from time to time by OOHHC Team Leader or an Executive Officer;
- Ensure that your behaviour and practices support and reflect the Veritas House values and promote the organisation's mission;
- Demonstrate a willingness to work reasonable extra hours as required for the benefit of the children, young people and the organisation;
- Ensure the effective maintenance and repair of all property, vehicles and equipment to appropriate standards that reflect the clients' needs and safety of all stakeholders.
- Act as a role model of professional behaviour inside and outside the workplace and in the community, wherever you can be identified as a worker of Veritas House.

Selection Criteria

Essential:

1. Qualifications in a related field eg Social Work, Community Work etc
2. Demonstrated ability to build relationships, engage with people from diverse backgrounds and work in partnership;
3. Demonstrated group work skills and the ability to deliver training packages eg Shared Lives
4. Demonstrated ability to work as part of a team
5. Knowledge and / or understanding of foster care, the role of carers and the challenges they face
6. Ability to plan, organise and prioritise work, develop work systems and work under pressure;
7. Strong interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills
8. Understanding of out of home care policy, standards and quality frameworks

Desirable:

1. Trained in “Shared Lives” and “Step by Step”